

# NVNDL

## WINDOWS INTO BOANDIK COUNTRY

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2013

Edited by Scott Heyes  
and Setoki Turteci

## Australia and the Land

A studio by Dr Scott Heyes & Setoki Tuiteci

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Cover image: Panoramic photograph of pine plantations that  
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SOUTH EAST  
ABORIGINAL  
FOCUS GROUP



Burrandies Aboriginal Corporation  
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# TRANSECTS

## WINDOWS INTO BOANDIK COUNTRY

A landscape architecture exhibition of the Mount Gambier region

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# Foreword

## SOUTH EAST ABORIGINAL FOCUS GROUP

Under Aboriginal Law and according to Aboriginal Lore the rich fertile lands of the Southeast region of South Australia belong to Aboriginal peoples.

The South East Aboriginal Focus Group (SEAFG) believe that the true Aboriginal history of the South East needs to be acknowledged and respectfully told, and that we all can learn from our past in ways that will enrich and influence our future. These histories include oral and written accounts of Aboriginal people and how their lifestyles at pre-colonial times were one of hunter-gathers – or more recently recognised and accepted as the first land managers, living sustainably within Country. On this point it is also important to recognise and acknowledge that Aboriginal people are still intrinsically connected to this Country.

The student projects that feature in this exhibition acknowledge these histories and connections to country. The students have researched about the land and travelled through it. As their



projects convey, they have come to learn that the land tells the real story. The SEAFG believe that the student's works will also highlight the great loss that has come with the forced alteration of land in the South East region.

The SEAFG fully supports investing time into education and the promotion of cultural activities, past and present. The SEAFG take this opportunity to celebrate the coming together of various parties acknowledged throughout this

document and who made this project a reality. The SEAFG hope that the students involved in this project will take this experience with them in their future careers and pathways.

The SEAFG believe the history of Aboriginal culture is something that all Australian people need to be aware of and that all Australians should take ownership of it. Now is the time to bring Aboriginal histories to the foreground as a way to start meaningful dialogue with Aboriginal communities both today and into the future. This project is the start of greater things to come in the region.

SEAFG CHAIRPERSONS

**KINGSLEY AHANG AND ROBYN CAMPBELL**





# Project Background and Introduction





# Mapping Country, Culture and Stories around the Mount and Surrounds

SCOTT HEYES AND SETOKI TUITECI

## Context of the Project

This exhibition, "Transects – Windows in Boandik Country," is the result of a landscape architecture investigation that involved studio based studies of counter mapping techniques, in addition to field-based studies of the Aboriginal history, knowledge, stories, and occupation of the lower South-East region of South Australia. It is a project that involved the collaborative effort, sponsorship, and endorsement of many Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal community groups, government agencies, and landholders in the Mount Gambier region of South Australia.

Over a period of fourteen weeks, beginning in August 2013, eighteen landscape architecture students studying a subject called *Australia and the Land* at the University of Canberra were asked to develop a set of maps that represent and build on stories about the Aboriginal heritage of the countryside around Mount Gambier. Under our direction, and the guid-

ance of the South East Aboriginal Focus Group, the project was designed to serve three purposes: 1) to fulfil academic requirements, which asked students to explore the meaning and treatment of the rural Australian landscape as it has been utilised and represented through literary, pictorial, oral, and visual forms; 2) to raise community awareness of Boandik occupation and knowledge systems of the land; and 3) to use the maps as a way to start a conversation in the community about the possibility of generating an Aboriginal keeping-place in the region, an initiative and long-term objective of the South East Aboriginal Focus Group. One requirement of the brief was that the maps be displayed on panels with dimensions of 2.4 x 1.2 metres.

With the endorsement and assistance of the South East Aboriginal Focus Group, the students travelled to Mount Gambier from 9-13 September, 2013, principally to travel through country with local guides as a way to begin to

understand and map facets of Aboriginal heritage of the region. Funds to bring students across from Canberra were kindly provided by the City of Mount Gambier and the South Australian Government's South East Natural Resource Management Board (SENRM). As part of their field preparations, students were asked to concentrate their mapping efforts on particular transects, which they studied in detail. To manage the mapping tasks, students worked in six groups of three, and travelled along their designated transects, some spanning tens of kilometres. Radiating from Mount Gambier, and loosely defined, these transects incorporated the major regional towns and places of: 1) Mount Gambier to Lake Bonney, including Carpenter's Rocks; 2) Mount Gambier to Piccaninnie Ponds, including Mount Schank; 3) Mount Gambier to Millicent and Mount Burr; 4) Mount Gambier to Penola; 5) Millicent to Lake George; and 6) Penola to Naracoorte, including Bool Lagoon and Naracoorte Caves.

Each group of students was guided through their designated transect over several days by locals with knowledge of Aboriginal heritage. This included guides from Forestry South Australia, the South Australian Government's South East Natural Resource Management Board, the South East Aboriginal Focus Group, the South Australian Government's Department of Environment, Water and Natural Resources, Burrandies Corporation, and local archaeologists, botanists, and farmers. Students walked country, listened to stories, felt the dirt between their toes, and braved the weather to experience the section of countryside that they were there to map. The field experience enabled them to have a better appreciation of the countryside. The works presented in this exhibition are a product of this engagement with people and places.

### What the Maps Represent

Each of student group adopted different methodologies to map their designated transects of the Mt Gambier region. Some took photos, some recorded their travels with a GPS, some wrote songs, others wrote poetry, and some recorded the countryside and the sounds of



animals using digital recordings and illustrations. The rich set of ways that the students recorded their five-day experience in Mount Gambier can be seen in the booklets produced by each group, and which accompany their panels in this exhibition. The maps generated by the students are conceptual and abstract in nature. They embody conversations students had with their guides in the field, and are based on research conducted in libraries and archives. The maps also reference landscape features and the modified landscapes that students observed as they traversed the designated transects. The maps are unique in that they also contain reference to each student's personal journey through the landscape. If one studies the maps in detail, it soon becomes

apparent that they contain several layers of meaning. Text, lights, wood, paint, and galvanised iron all come together to tell stories about the Boandik people's connection to country in past and contemporary contexts.

### The Content of this Catalogue

This catalogue features a note from the City of Mt Gambier, a proud sponsor and supporter of this project, followed by essays on the Boandik people by Neville Bonney and Geoff Aslin. These two individuals, locals who are respected for their knowledge of the Boandik people, guided students in the field. A description of the maps developed for each transect follows, along with photographs and illustrations the students took during the map-making process. We have included notes from the design experts who examined the student work when their work was submitted in design studios at the University of Canberra in late November, 2013. These notes from the design jury provide the reader with a sense of the quality of the student work, and the pedagogical value of the project.



## The Learning Outcomes of this Project

This project is the third university project involving engagement with the South East Aboriginal Focus Group in the Mt Gambier region. It was made possible after almost a year of discussion and planning. We believe that the project provides a model for bringing Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal community groups together, to sharing and celebrating the richness of Aboriginal knowledge, and to demonstrating how Universities can successfully partner with Aboriginal groups and local government in mutual and beneficial ways. For many of the students, this was the first time they had ever been involved with an Aboriginal community. Many of the students have relayed to us how proud they were to be involved in this project, and how they have grown as individuals, and become more aware of Aboriginal knowledge of the landscape and connections to country. We believe that the quality of the student work was outstanding. Their commitment to the project was unwavering, as evidenced in the beautiful, deeply meaningful, and intriguing maps on display in this exhibition.

We hope that you enjoy the exhibition and that you see the Mt Gambier region in a new light!

*Dr Scott Hayes is an Assistant Professor in Landscape Architecture at the University of Canberra. He has been conducting research on Indigenous Conceptions of Landscape for over a decade in Australia and Canada. Scott holds a Research Associate position at the Smithsonian Institution's National Museum of Natural History in the Department of Anthropology.*

*Mr Setoki Tuilevi is a Master of Environmental Design student at the University of Canberra, with an interest in traditional Fijian environmental design practices. Setoki was the past president of the Fijian Association of Architects.*

## Acknowledgements

Thank you to the Boandik community, the South East Aboriginal Focus Group, and other Aboriginal groups for your strong support and commitment to this project. This project was made possible through financial and in-kind support of a number of organisations and individuals from Mount Gambier and the surrounding region. In particular, we thank David New, Aboriginal Engagement Officer with the South Australian Government's Department of Environment, Water and Natural Resources (DEWNR), for helping to organise the student visit and field activities associated with the South East Aboriginal Focus Group. Thank you

to the City of Mount Gambier and the South East Natural Resource Management Board (Govt of SA) for providing funding towards this project. At the City of Mt Gambier, we pay special thanks Councillor Jim Mayer, Barbara Cernovskis and Alison Brash for their strong support of this initiative. In the field, we thank the following people and businesses for hosting students and showing them around the countryside: SEAFG – Doug Nicholls, Des Hartman, Robyn Campbell, and Kingsley Ahang; Forestry SA – Mark Whan, Bryan Haywood and Troy Horn; farmers – Ian Stewart, Greg Todd, Nick Hunt and Michael Aldersey; DEWNR – Rob Palamountain, Melissa Hunter, and Deborah Craven-Carden; Aboriginal Affairs and Reconciliation Division, Dept. of Premier and Cabinet, Govt. of SA – Justine Hobbs and Dale Hancock; Bush Repair – Ken Jones; SELGA – Ann Aldersey; Burrandies Corp – Emma Hay; and Kerry Hunt, Neville Bonney, Geoff and Samantha Aslin, and Jack and Pat Bourne. Thank you to the Centre for Creative and Cultural Research at the University of Canberra for supporting this project.

# A Shared Learning Project

## CITY OF MOUNT GAMBIER

The City of Mount Gambier proudly acknowledge and offer our respect to the Boandik people, as the traditional custodians of our land. We respect their spiritual relationship with the land and recognise the deep feelings of attachment our Indigenous people have with the land. We are committed to building respectful partnerships with our Indigenous people, learning from one another and learning together.

The City of Mount Gambier has been a proud partner of the shared learning project *Mapping Country, Culture and Stories around the Mount and Surround*. An outcome of this project showcases work developed by Australian and international students studying landscape architecture at Canberra University through this transect exhibition 'Windows into Boandik Country'. The work developed by students has occurred under the advice and guidance of members of the South East Aboriginal Focus Group. These works respond directly to their recent learning about our unique cultural and physical landscape.



Our City encompasses one of the most significant geo-cultural landscapes in the Limestone Coast. The history of the creation of the Blue and Valley Lakes are significant features of the Kanawinka volcanic trail from both geological perspectives and cultural ones.

We sit upon a vast story platform and as our City matures, so has public awareness of a much older cultural telling of the development of the lakes which form our cities' heart. Our award winning community engagement project has

produced state of the art interpretive displays, sound and light shows and films that engage people with Boandik culture.

Knowledge of Craitbul and his families' travels have resonance not only with our Indigenous citizens, but for many other locals who live in our volcanoes' shadows. Indeed, thousands of visitors to Mount Gambier engage with this story through the big screen experience 'Volcano' available to them from our Main Corner, through the literature widely available around the town, and their own engagement with local Indigenous cultural knowledge holders and passionate historians.

In 2010 the City of Mount Gambier began exploring the potential of conducting a broader local heritage survey to further increase Council's understanding of local heritage issues, with a subsequent vision of further increasing public awareness of Aboriginal heritage, and to assist Council's planning needs. A preliminary consultation which took place saw stakeholder feedback identify it would be ideal if the broader



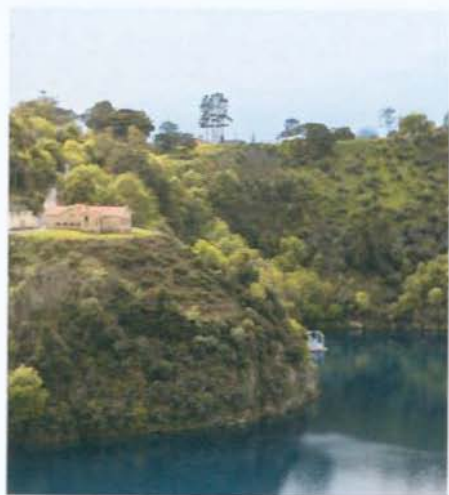
regional area was included in any Aboriginal cultural heritage study (not just Mount Gambier City itself), with that area defined to encompass wider Boandik traditional country.

Fortuitously in 2013 we were approached by the University of Canberra in partnership with the South East Aboriginal Focus Group of the Department of Environment, Water and Natural Resources to support a seed project to map country, culture and stories in and around Mount Gambier, with the view that this may in turn, lead towards the development of concepts

for consideration as design steps for a future Aboriginal Living Cultural Centre in the Lower South East of South Australia.

The works in this exhibition by landscape architecture students are a response to walking, listening and learning together whilst students travelled to Boandik country in September 2013.

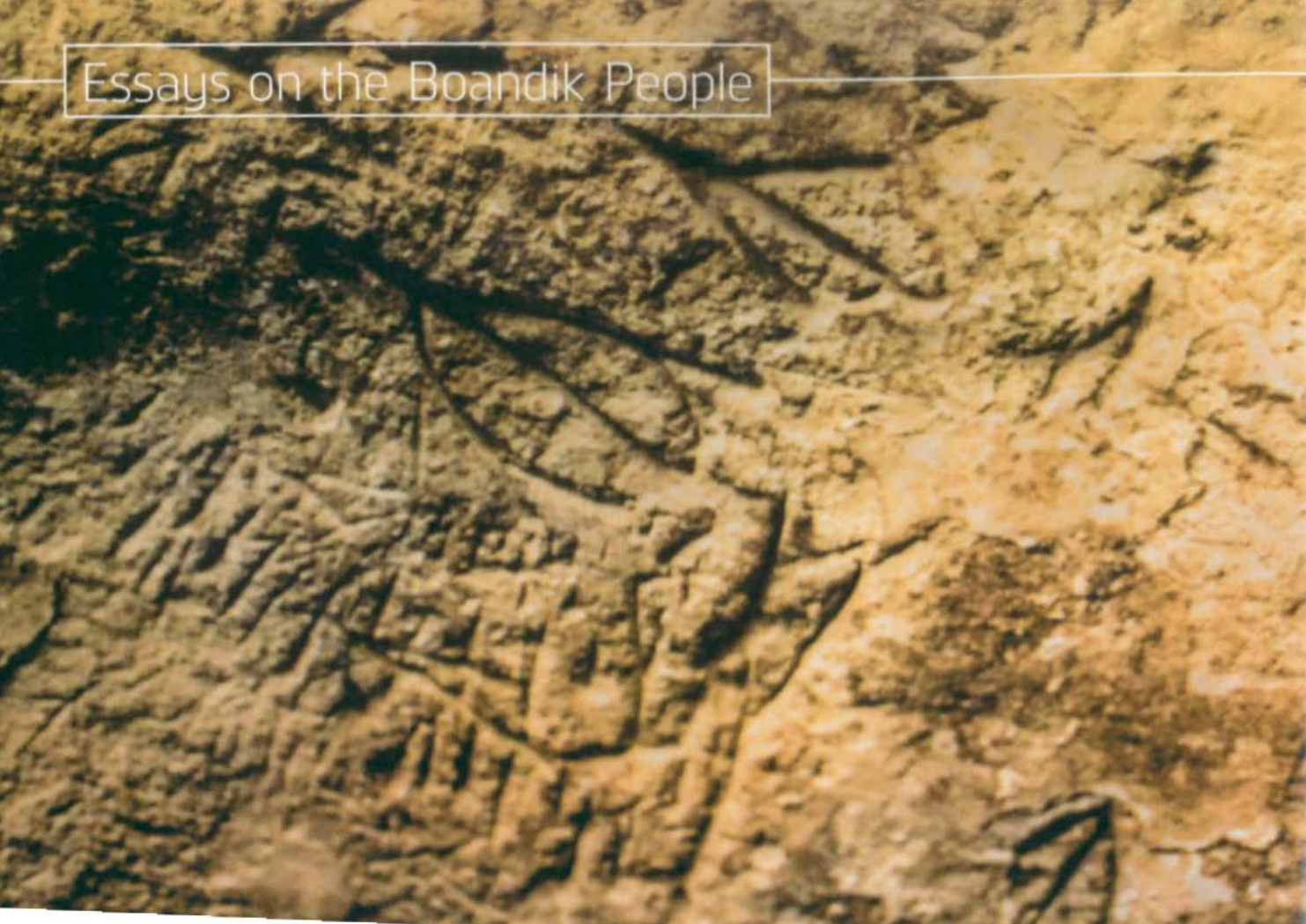
With a firm commitment to being recognised as a lifelong learning community, we know that extending networks and relationships through partnership projects such as this are important



steps to deepening our cultural knowledge and engagement with our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community. As we venture on our journey of greater reconciliation we look forward to sharing our story with a national and international audience.



# Essays on the Boandik People





# Proud Peoples – An Overview

NEVILLE BONNEY

At the time of European settlement over 200 years ago, the land we now know as Australia was occupied by Aborigines. The Aborigines were settled over most areas; they were divided into groups we know now as Aboriginal Nations. These groupings were then sub-divided into what was known as clans/hordes.

This essay looks at just one of the 150 clans that constituted Aboriginal Australia – the *Boandik* people. In the southeast corner of South Australia the *Boandik* people (often spelt different ways) occupied land spanning over 150 kilometres from the coastline to the interior and some 50 kilometres to the north-east towards the town of Penola. Their lands also extended about 100 kilometres to the east of present day Mount Gambier, taking in the area of the Glenelg and Wannon Rivers towards Casterton in Victoria. Adjoining Nations were the *Gunditjmarra* to the South East, *Ngarrindjeri* to the North, and the *Nargatt* to the northeast.



The lands of the *Boandik* people have changed considerably since European settlement. Prior to this the landscape was generally flat, with old dune ranges running parallel in a north-south direction. Much water was trapped between these dunes systems, which allowed for the formation of permanent lakes and swamps. The pre-settlement landscape was bordered on the southeast by rivers and the area had a volcanic history. The formation of these landscape phenomena features heavily in *Boandik* dream-time legends.

The area received good and regular rainfalls, and the countryside was mostly green and lush. Within this landscape the *Boandik* people lived a life gifted by Earth's bounty, a landscape setting that is hard to picture today as a result of modifications to the land through agricultural and forestry practices.

Artefacts collected in the South East suggest that the *Boandik* people and their predecessors have occupied this area for at least 15,000 years. Oral history and written records noted that the *Boandik* people around the time of settlement were not an aggressive group; they lived within the laws passed down by ancestors and which were administered strictly by elders. As they continue to do today, the *Boandik* observed the different seasons and song lines, and observed a strict totem blood-line system within *Boandik* law and custom.

There were strict laws and customs for marriage and death of the elderly. Like many other Aboriginal Nations, men were the hunters and women were gatherers. Men hunted animals such as Kangaroo, Emu, Wombat, Lizard,



Snake, water birds, Possum, Quoll, Tiger cat, and Bandicoot. Women gathered seasonal fruits, tubers, seeds from native plants, muntrie berries, pigface (coastal fig), native yams, and wattle seed. Grass seeds were pounded to produce flour and swan and duck eggs were collected from wetlands. The women were also masters at gathering reeds and sedges, using these to weave mats, baskets and wrap around garments. The *Boandik* people like other Aboriginal nations understood food conservation – they only hunted and gathered for their immediate requirements, knowing full well that food resources had to be managed carefully.

The *Boandik* once lived in shelters made from tree and shrub branches that were often interwoven with grasses and sedges. At times small caves were utilised as shelters. The *Boandik* were artistic as evident in the paintings and symbols illustrated in some many caves and rock shelters within the region. Since food was abundant all year round in the region, the *Boandik* did not need to live a nomadic way of life. But each summer, around February to March, members of the *Boandik* clan would travel to the coast and camp there to harvest shells, and dive for abalone off the reef systems. They would also catch ample supply of fish, crayfish, and crabs. They also took advantage of herbs and

plant material to chew and eat that was not present inland. The coast offered other materials such as a flint stone that could be traded to inland Nations and which would be used to make sharp instruments for cutting or as blades for hunting.

There were the customary gatherings of feasts and games between clans or neighbouring nations – sometimes these gatherings occurred to settle disputes. This was the *Boandik* way of life up to the time of European settlement.

It is said that the last “full-blood” *Boandik* Aborigine, Lanky Karna, passed away in 1904. He is buried in the Beachport cemetery. Even with the passing of Lanky and other elders, the rich history of the *Boandik* people has not been forgotten; the *Boandik* community today is currently working on programs to record their lifestyle, language and other culturally important events. This interpretive work by the university students on *Boandik* connections to country highlights the richness of *Boandik* culture and the deep connections they have always had with their homeland.

*Neville is an expert on native flora. He has authored many books on the South East and native plants.*

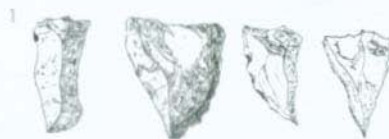
# Personal Reflections on Aboriginal History of the Region

GEOFF ASLIN

## Surface Campsites

For several years, I have been a member of the Anthropology and Archaeology Society of Victoria (AASV), a life member of the S.A. Group and a foundation member of the Australian Rock Art Research Association (AURA). I am recognised as one of three leaders in Cave Rock Art research in Australia. I discovered one of the largest ancient Ice Age Cave Art sites in the world and in one year alone I discovered thirteen new cave art sites - a world record!

My interest in the *Bunganditj* (*Boandik*) People began sixty years ago and much of my knowledge learned of this tribe, their culture, Stone Age tools, Pleistocene Ice-Age Cave Art, and flint mining, has been learned through personal observations. Many of my school books were illustrated with Aboriginal drawings whilst other children were drawing planes or cars. In 1961, I generated an article on Aboriginal cultural history, the first of many papers, which was accepted for the school magazine. It was titled "The Lost Race".



During the mid-1950 and through the 1960's I amassed a collection of local flint artefacts comprising of several hundred specimens. Many hundreds of hours have been spent in researching, grid recording and photographing dozens of *Bunganditj* campsites, scarred trees, ice-age cave art and flint mining. I have had the privilege of meeting, corresponding and working with many of the early anthropologists. During 1962, whilst still at high school, I had the thrill and privilege to meet the late Dr Norman Tindale from the Adelaide Museum. Dr Tindale gave a lecture in Mt. Gambier. I recall that I was the only schoolchild there. Dr Tindale said to him me: "I am surprised to hear that you show an interest in the *Bunganditj* tribe at such a young age". I was invited back to the Adelaide Museum and at a later date went out on a field trip with Dr Tindale, which gave me knowledge of how the experts conducted field work.



Many others helped me during those early years, including the late Stan Mitchell from the Melbourne Museum and the late Ron Black from Mt. Richmond, Victoria. The late Graeme Pretty, a past curator of Anthropology and Archaeology at the Adelaide Museum, while viewing my collection said, "You have a fascinating store of local knowledge of the *Bunganditj* People and I suggest that you compile notes of the old sites and local experiences before they are lost forever". I followed Mr Pretty's advice after more than twenty years absence from some of the camping places. This renewed my interest and I found a complete environmental change had taken place. Old camping places of the *Bunganditj* Tribe had been lost to grazing, pine plantations, and urban sprawl. Even once permanent swamps and springs had dried up. The change was even noticeable in the remain-



ing native bushland. The understory of small plant life was disappearing because of a drier climate and the lowering of the water table. All this can be matched with old black and white photographs taken previously. This noticeable change is now more accepted and known as global warming. During the 1940s and 1950s I recall the landscape character of places like Blackfellow Caves through to Nene Valley, (now the Nene Valley Conservation Park) being virtually all drifting sand with some very large sand hills. These places are now thickly vegetated. There were some small marshy swamps and even the Nene Valley creek flowed. It was good habitat for the Ground Parrot which I observed there but is now extinct from the area. In the mid-1950s the *Acacia sophorae* (Coastal Watle) appeared in the local coastal area. Very few of these small acacias grew within the conservation park in the 1950s and early 1960s but within a few years they had spread in all directions. Their predominating low spreading branches blocked the light from other native plants, eventually killing them thus changing the environment and consolidating the sand hills. Prior to this change, the old *Bundaditj* camp middens and remains were numerous, highly visible, and easy to record.



### Cave Art and Flint Mining

I was twelve years old in 1958 when I was first shown Aboriginal engravings in caves in the Mt. Gambier district by the late Ron Black, a fellow amateur anthropologist. Mr Black reported the find to Robert Edwards of the Adelaide Museum. Between Mr Black, the late Tom McCourt, and me, we managed to keep the location fairly confidential for fear of vandalism to the engravings. In 1981, twenty five years later, I met with the cave art specialists, Robert and Elfriede Bednarik. I offered them help and provided them with local knowledge of cave sites. I joined their parietal rock art team and contributed much important information to the world of anthropology in general. Forty sites have been discovered in the region between Millicent, SA and Portland, Vic. At least thirty of these sites, in-

cluding all the major sites found, were discovered by me. Many of these caves, the first art galleries in this region, contain early man's sequences of art work. Finger flutings in the soft montmilch or moon milk, which is a precipitant of carbonate formation or like a soft pliable algae formation, occur within these galleries. The extraction of silica or flint from seams in the caves and walls of sinkholes occurred around this time. Non stylistic simple grooving was followed by engraved concentric and divisioned circles. The last sequence was stylistic engravings. Anthropologist T.D. Campbell, born in Millicent SA, was the first to record flint mining in Gran Gran cave. The local ice age cave art sequence is known as the *Karake Sequence* after Aslin and Bednarik 1983. *Karake* means ornamental carving after Smith, 1880. The ancient aboriginal people drew inspiration from their surroundings, their imaginative and legendary dreaming of everyday happenings which inspired them to make finger marks and engravings in caves. To me, the ancient ice age cave art is "a dreamtime connection to the land and sky. A priceless record carved in our caves. It was purposeful, original and deliberative symbols of that time, the beginnings of art in the Mount Gambier district."





## Meetings with the Elders

I had the privilege to know several Aboriginal elders of past generations who had my trust. They were quite pleased that I took an interest in their heritage and were very supportive in how I was recording it and that I experienced it first hand in the field and not just out of text books. Some Elders said to me "that they did not want their past forgotten" and handed me copies of papers for safe keeping. They also said to me "we are concerned for the next generation as the younger ones do not know the tribal ways like we did and that they would get it all wrong and make up their own dreaming stories".

My grandparents grew up with the last members of the *Bunganditj* tribe. They were in their mid-20s when the last *Bunganditj* passed on. My great

grandparents owned the coach changing station called Six Mile Inn. Food rations were often handed out to members of the tribe who camped nearby. My grandparents spoke highly of the Aborigines and always said that "they were beautiful and dear people." They passed on to me stories and original photos of tribal members. My grandparents knew them all by their names.

This paper represents a minute glimpse into the past of the *Bunganditj*. I recommend the following references for further reading:

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*Geoff is a local archaeologist and a custodian of significant Aboriginal heritage collection.*

**Image 1 & 2:** Artefacts from Geoff Aslin's private collection. These were drawn in pen and ink in 1958 when Geoff was 13 years old at Reedy Park Primary School. The artefacts were collected from a point near the sea caves at Blackfellow Caves. There was a Wookwine-points manufacturing site there. The site is now part of the Blackfellow Caves township. **Image 3:** Ice-Age Tyliform art Eagle and Crow Legend after Tindale 1974 in Ninmarni Cave after G. Aslin 1958 or Molangine Cave after R. Bednarik 1982. Kongorong, South Australia. Photo G. Aslin. **Image 4:** Watercolour painting of Cootle Swamp. Reindelsham based a reconstruction of the past. The swamp was drained in 1863 for cattle grazing. Where the shaft of the light is shining through the gap, the "Narrow Neck" is now a drain. By G. Aslin.

Exhibited works —  
Conceptual maps of Boandik country







# Project Brief and Description

SCOTT HEYES AND SETOKI TUITECI

The production of panels for this exhibition resulted from third year landscape architecture students being asked to work in groups to analyse, interpret and represent the landscape setting of the Mt Gambier region. The learning objectives of the studio subject *Australia and the Land* were that students gain an understanding of Indigenous connections to place, develop critical writing techniques and research skills, learn how to express ideas visually and verbally at an advanced level, and learn how to interpret and comprehend the Australian landscape at the landscape scale.

As part of the studio brief, students were asked to consider Aboriginal occupation, heritage and stories of the land. Involving intensive research, a field trip to Mt Gambier, and discussions with Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal knowledge holders from the region, students gained an appreciation of Aboriginal concepts of place and knowledge of country.

The design brief required students to produce a panel that would occupy the dimensions of 2.4m x 1.2m. This panel size was chosen to encourage the students to work and conceptualise landscape at a large scale, for each portion of countryside (transect) that students were required to map averaged 60 kilometers in length. The challenge put to the students was to not only develop a method to document information gathered on landscape and people from research and while in the field, but to also synthesize the material. Ultimately, the students were required to translate their research and experiences into a panel that would represent and capture the essence of the designated transect under study.

In the production of the panels, students were free to choose to craft these out of whatever materials they desired. The brief included a special requirement, however, on the portability of each panel. Students were required to design the panels to be disassembled for ease of transportation and exhibition. The final production

of the panels depended on how well students understood the individual transects and how each group was able to work together in the interpretation, conceptualisation and eventually the construction or production of each transect panel.

Each group of students was asked to produce an A5 booklet to accompany their panel. The booklet was required to contain an overall description of the panel, explanation of the visual elements, the research that informed the making of the panel, the significant Aboriginal aspects identified by the group along the transect, a short biography of the individual group members and their contribution to the production with notes and photographs and sketches where applicable. The booklets were required to be structured and referenced and be exhibition standard.

In addition to the booklets, each student was required to generate a visual journal of their experiences throughout the semester. Included in



this exhibition, the journals illustrate the student's thoughts, musings, and creative processes, and chart the development of the ideas behind the panel designs. These journals are rich in personal reflection and are visually arresting.

Each group was encouraged to explore different possibilities through conceptual sketches and full scale prototypes before the construction of the final panels. This design process was adopted to ensure that the final product was refined and the quality of the interpretation of each transect as meaningful as possible. The use of the University of Canberra's laser cutters, routers, and other modern design technology and equipment was encouraged for the production of the panels.

To conclude the formal assessment of the studio project, each group was required to present their panels before a panel of jurors and their peers for ten minutes, with an additional ten minutes available for questions and feedback. Combined, the panel, booklet and presentation contributed towards the students' final assessment for the *Australia and Land Studio*, and eventually the exhibition of their work in Mount Gambier.



*A map of the lower south east region of South Australia under study, showing the six transects that student's explored for the studio project. The demarcation of each transect was indicative and they served to provide the students with a geographical region to study. Map produced by Setaki Tutteci, using Google Maps as a base layer.*

# Juror's Comments on Exhibited Works

JUROR 1: MR ED WENSING

The class undertook a field visit to the Mt Gambier region in South Australia to meet with local people and undertake field inspections under their guidance. They met with a wide range of local people including Aboriginal people with connections in the region, local farmers and landholders, foresters, rangers and conservationists. Following their field work, the students were required to produce a visual three dimensional panel or transect of their journey depicting what they learnt from their observations, notes, photos or other images and conversations with the local people they met.

I was very impressed with the level of effort the students put into preparing their panels and booklets. All of the panels produced by the students, either in small groups or individually, showed that they had taken good field notes, thought about how to present their analysis, prepared an accompanying booklet to explain their analysis and thought about their oral presentation.

I was also very impressed that many of the students had absorbed and reflected the fact that the land was and still is, very significant to the local Aboriginal people. Two of the panels stood out for me in particular because they depicted the importance of Aboriginal people's connection to country and their creative use of materials and textures to depict the clash between the country's original inhabitants and the colonial settlers.

I have often expressed the view that there are two elements to the High Court's decision in *Mabo v State of Queensland* (No. 2) [1992]. The first element is the substance of Eddie Koiki Mabo's rightful claim to his traditional country on the Island of Mer in the Torres Strait under his family's traditional law and custom. The second element is the High Court's recognition of the existence and legitimacy of another system of law and custom. The true impact of this second element is not widely appreciated by the wider Australian population.

Our universities play an important role in educating the next generation and the wider community. By requiring our students at the University of Canberra to undertake field visits, to walk on country to meet with and listen to the local people, and to develop visual panels and texts depicting their experiences, we are advancing our community's understanding of the continuing connection of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to their customary lands.

*Mr Ed Wensing, FPIA, is a PhD Candidate at the National Centre for IndigeStudies, Australian National University. He is also Visiting Fellow at the Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies and a Visiting Lecturer in Urban and Regional Planning Program at the University of Canberra. He is also holds a Visiting Lecturer position at the School of Earth and EnvironSciences, Faculty of Science and Engineering, James Cook University, and he is an Associate at SCIS Economics and Planning.*

# Student Introduction

JUROR 2 – DR VIVEKA TURNBULL HOCKING

The works presented by the students represent an exciting example of a studio committed to community engagement and interrogating a research-centred approach to interpreting landscapes at a regional scale. The students demonstrated an understanding of how to engage with community members and how to engage with a range of theoretical research approaches. The works were developed with a great sensitivity to indigenous knowledge and landscapes. Students produced high quality visual interpretations that conceptualised landscape in a sophisticated manner. The design and construction of the maps were deep and meaningful installations.

*Dr Viveka Turnbull Hocking lectures at the Faculty of Arts and Design, University of Canberra. She is an Adjunct Fellow at the ANU College of Medicine, Biology and Environment.*

BY RYL PARKER

The exhibition *Transects: Windows into Boandik Country* is a series of seven art pieces that attempt to give an honest portrayal of the culture in the Lower South-East. As third year students in Landscape Architecture at the University of Canberra, we usually create landscape designs that are focused on the social, economic and environmental aspects of the landscape. Rarely have we studied culture in such depth, despite its significant effect on landscapes. Studying the cultures of the Lower South-East and their relationship to one another through time has been an eye-opening experience.

Each of the seven art pieces describes a different transect around Mt Gambier using a variety of artistic techniques. These transects are: 1) Mt. Gambier to Lake Bonney, 2) Mt. Gambier to Piccaninnie Swamp, 3) Mt. Gambier to Mt. Burr, 4) Mt. Gambier to Penola (two groups focussed on this transect), 5) Millicent to Lake George, and 6) Penola to Naracoorte.

As each of these transects is around 50km long, we were studying a much larger area than was previously undertaken. The community was invaluable as a source of knowledge and inspiration. Even so there is much left to explore in the culture and heritage of the area, and we hope others will be similarly encouraged to contribute to our understanding of it.

For many of us our intention before the field trip was to study the Aboriginal heritage in the area. Once in Mt. Gambier, we learned about the European, Scottish and other cultures that lived in this area and began to notice the relationships between these cultures – both to each other and to their land.

Creating the artwork was a difficult process – not because we didn't know what to represent, but rather we didn't know when to stop. It came down to finding what particular message we felt needed saying, and expressing it with maximum clarity. We hope you enjoy the final experience as much as we enjoyed creating it.



# Pathways from Forest to Seashore

Transect 1 Mount Gambier to Lake Bonney including Carpenter's Rocks



**KIMBERLEY ABEND**

I chose landscape architecture because I love the harsh and beautiful environment Australia offers and wish to try to bring these into my designs. The green South Australian landscape with its large gums standing their ground in the paddocks I found beautiful.

I enjoyed my time in Mt Gambier taking in the landscape, vegetation and culture. Through our journey of creating this panel we had many discussions on how best to create and present our work. Inspired by Neville Bonnie and his knowledge of the native vegetation was key. I participated in drawing the images, arranging the images on the panel and contributed to the booklet. Sam Wellham, Damien Knight and myself I feel make a good team and work well together, easily bouncing ideas off each other and finding the best solution.



**DAMIEN KNIGHT**

My interests in multiculturalism and architectural styles of the world have always influenced my taste in various facets of everyday life but until committing to the studies of landscape architecture and design I had little understanding or the true appreciation of the deep and rich connection between the indigenous people of the world and the land they occupy.

The units this semester, based on global indigenous conceptions and relationships to landscape, have provided me with a base of knowledge and set of ideals that will influence me as a designer as well as a person, for many years to come. Our group was a great fit with each of us taking on different responsibilities while sharing the load of those tasks, providing each other with invaluable companionship along the journey to a foreign land. Along the way, I recorded many notes about points of interest and personal feelings throughout the field trip. Overall I have found this experience incredibly rewarding.



**SAMANTHA WELLHAM**

Growing up in the city I am somewhat isolated from indigenous affairs and culture, so with the announcement of us undertaking this project at the start of the year I was a little unsure as to what to expect, but being welcomed big heartedly into the indigenous community on our arrival in Mt Gambier set the scene for the week to come.

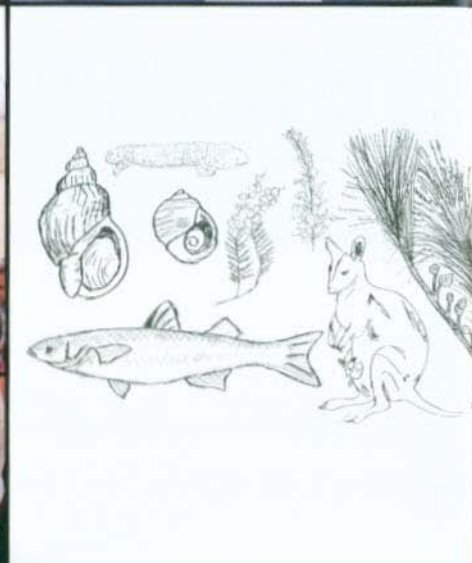
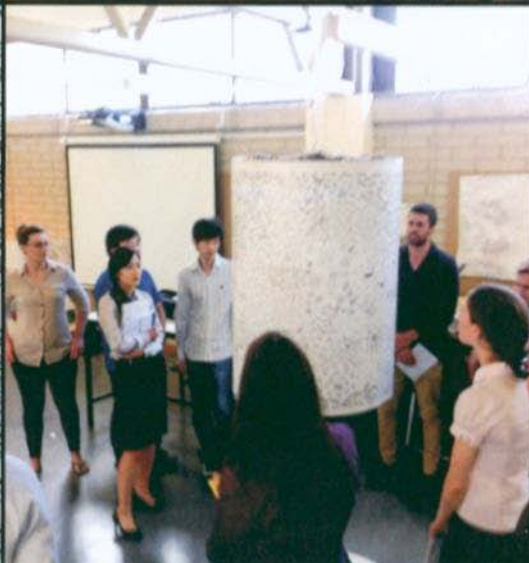
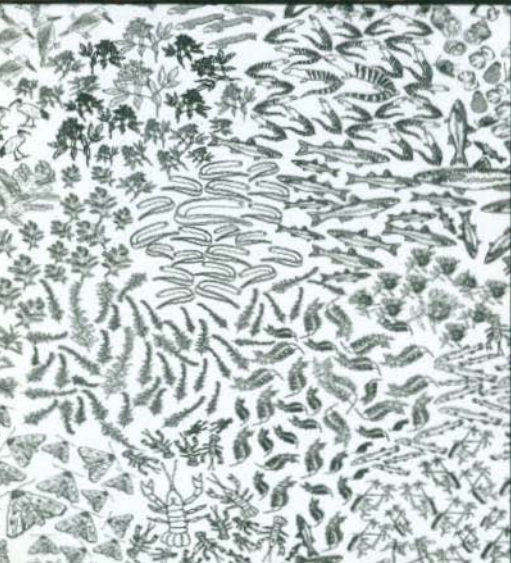
The time my group and I spent with Neville Bonney was not only extremely useful for our mapping exercise, but was something that I will remember for many years to come. The information that was shared with us throughout our time down in Mt Gambier has already been the topic of many conversations I've had with all walks of life. I have not only learnt a great deal myself but I can now share this knowledge and give others a better understanding of Australia's long history.

The inspiration for our panel came from the bushwalk that Neville Bonney took us on during our time in Mt. Gambier. What amazed us about this experience was Neville's ability to pick out important and useful plants that were concealed by the vast and dense landscape. The knowledge and skills required to navigate and live at one with this land is essential for the continuation of Australian Indigenous culture.

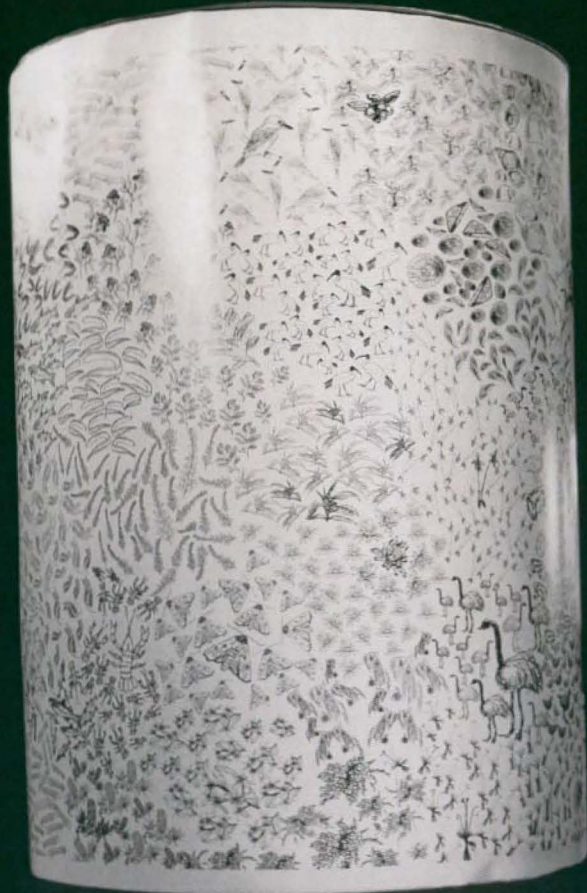
Our cylindrical panel demonstrates the seasonal migrations of the *Boandik* people from the forests of the mountain ranges to the coastal scrubland, and the resources that relate to these incredible landscape settings.











Pathways from Forest to Seashore

# A Country with Fences has lost its Spirit

Transect 2 Mount Gambier to Piccaninnie Ponds including Mount Schank



**ANNI HUANG**

This is the third year since I came to Australia to study landscape architecture. My foreign background allows me to view the land and its stories from a relatively subjective angle. In this project I worked together with my team to generate illustrations of what we had seen and felt during the field trip. Because of my skills with graphic editing programs, I was tasked to transform hand drawings into digital illustrations. These digital illustrations were then etched into timber using laser technology. I also contributed to this project by taking photos and video in the field, and I was responsible for keeping in touch with our guides to seek their advice on various facets of the project, and to share information with them about the design of our panel.



**BEN NICHOLAS**

I am currently studying my third year of landscape architecture. Initially choosing this course because I wanted to be involved in the design and construction of skate parks, I have now gathered a wealth of inspiration from many elements of design which I hope to incorporate in design projects, whether they be small residential gardens or urban design projects.

My task for this project was contributing a large number of ideas and the ability to source some of the key components that make up the panels. I brought to the project previous experience in model making and woodwork projects. I was able to source materials and lead the team with the construction. This project has taught me a great deal about my drive to get the best out of myself and from each member of the group



**BRONWEN ROWE**

I am currently in my third year of university studying landscape architecture. I really enjoy being able to combine my love of art and design with my love of plants and the outdoors. I aspire in wanting to create outdoor spaces for people to enjoy, discover and engage with the outdoors.

In this project our team worked well together and did much of the tasks in close collaboration. We used each other's strengths to our advantage to ensure the best result for a panel. We each picked a particular site we visited along our transect in Mt Gambier to incorporate into our panel. I focused on Mt Schank and its surrounding area. My main task for this assignment was to research information about our transect. Whilst in Mt Gambier, I was the note-taker, jotting down information we were told whilst out on the field. When we came back I continued to research about the area and collated the information we had found and were told.

Paintings are more than images in a picture frames, they are stories that unravel as you look deeper and closer into them. They are a personal journey, engaging the viewer and allowing them to discover and learn for themselves. Our panel is like a painting, telling the story of the Boandik people and their movement through the land.

During our field trip, we were told the quote, "A country with fences has lost its spirit." It moved and inspired us. It made us realise and recognise the high level of impact and degradation of land the settlers had on the natural landscape which had been appreciated and cared for by the Boandik people.

The main industries of Mt Gambier are agriculture and timber. The implementation of these 'fences' physically and symbolically have impacted and degraded the natural vegetation and caused the spirit and sacredness of this site of the Boandik people to be affected.

Our panel takes on a "before and after approach" of our transect in the Mt Gambier region. The top layer reflects the natural landscape which was evident whilst the Boandik

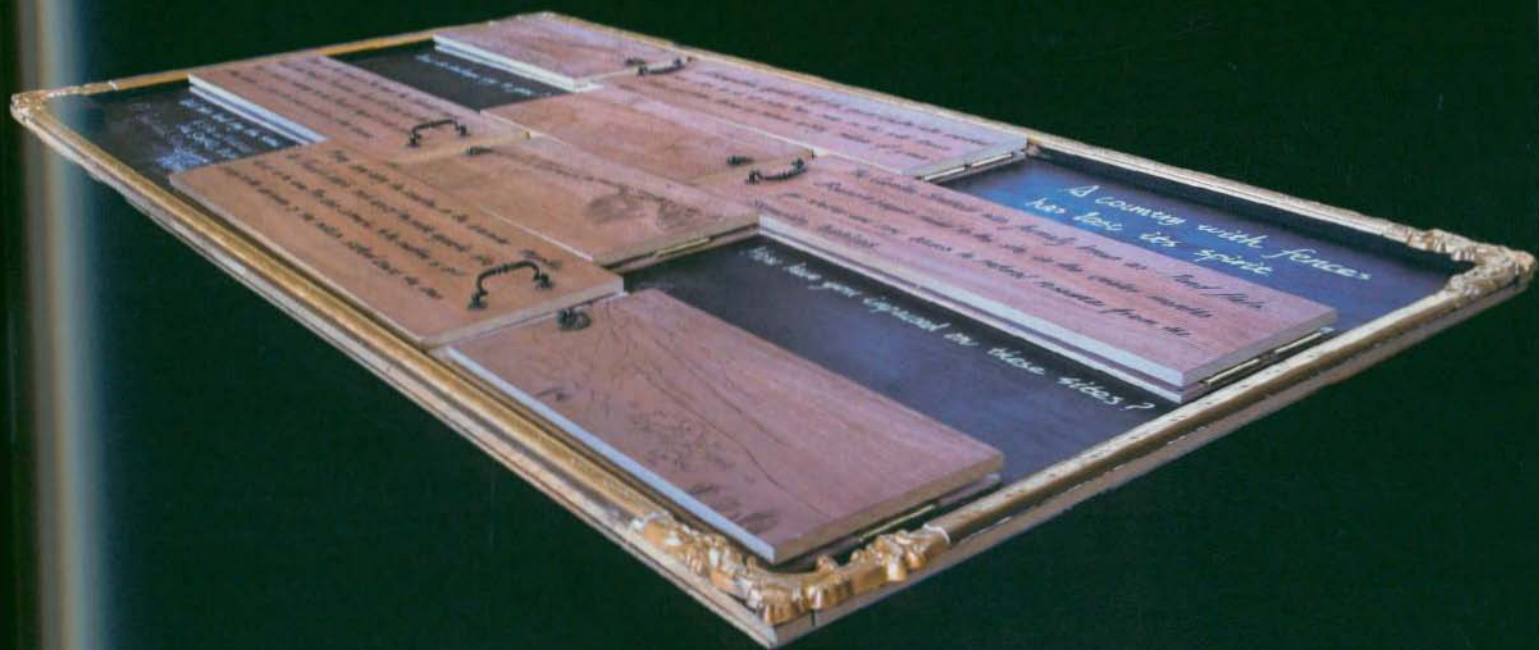
people were on country, whilst the bottom layer reflects the degradation European settlers have caused.

Our panel is of two journeys, a tale of land remembered, and the land as it is today. Our design engages viewers and allows them to interact with our panel. The handles represent European impacts and the beginning of the industrial age. The handles allow viewers to open the panels like a window to see the change in vegetation and land over time.

Our panel incorporates chalkboards, so viewers can become involved in learning and discovering about our panel. Quotes and questions are written, to get viewers to contemplate and reflect on the land and their personal impact on it.







A Country with Fences has lost its Spirit

# Dreaming Habitat

Transect 3 Mount Gambier to Millicent and Mount Burr



**TERRY HUANG**

I am a third year student studying landscape architecture at the University of Canberra. As an international student, I am really proud to be involved in this transect study. I greatly appreciate that this subject gave me the opportunity to explore the spectacular scenery of the Mt Gambier region, and to better understand Aboriginal culture.

While in the field, I recorded the route of our transect and did the drawing on perspex with James, along with making the volcano layer of the model.



**JAMES QIU**

I am a year three student at the University of Canberra. I come from China and I have thoroughly enjoyed studying in Australia.

As an international student, the journey of Mt Gambier enhanced my understanding of Indigenous culture.

For the production of our model, I was responsible for designing and making the swamp layer along with engraving work.



**KIKI TU**

I am a third year landscape architecture student at the University of Canberra. My passion is painting, fashion and every novel thing. I chose to study landscape architecture as I want to learn how to create beautiful and harmonious landscapes.

For this project, I was responsible for undertaking research in archives and libraries. I also helped make the model and I generated most of the visual elements in the model.





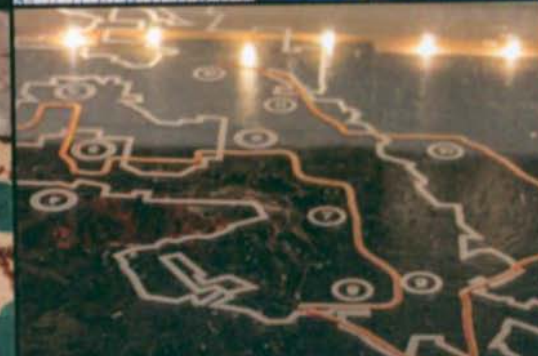
fought, sung their songs and died here for hundreds of years. It was a place to meet all their needs. Men hunted kangaroo, wallaby, possum and many species of birds, whilst women collected berries, fruits, leaves, seed and roots for nutrition. The region we studied contains many historical sites of Aboriginal significance. We are grateful that our local guides, Mark Whan and Troy Horn, of Forestry SA, were able to show us sites important to the Boandik people, and describe to us some of the Boandik belief systems of the region.

Our design is composed of four layers: layer one represents footprints and tracks; layer two describes the rebirth of forest systems; layer three evokes wetland systems; and layer four is intended to evoke the memory of landscape.



We were responsible for mapping the region from Mt Gambier to Millicent, including Mt Burr. We all come from China. We really appreciated having this opportunity to explore Boandik culture and to learn about their traditional lands. The transect we focussed on is mostly covered by beautiful forest scenery. It also contains caves, swamp, and volcanos. Boandik people have lived, hunted, loved,











## The Way We Went...

Transect 4 Mount Gambier to Penola (Team 1)



EVAN O'HANLON OAM

Born with cerebral palsy, I compete as a sprinter in the paralympic T38 class. Having competed in both the Beijing (2008) and London (2012)

paralympic games I have bought home a haul of five gold medals with each medal being accompanied by a new world record for the respective event.

In 2007 I started my glacier-like progression towards my Bachelor of Landscape Architecture Degree, participating in part-time studies while following my sporting passion.

I would like to thank everyone involved in our trip for the enormous efforts that contributed towards our education. I would particularly like to thank our guide Nick Hunt for his time and vast knowledge of the area, and Rosalie Hunt, for her hospitality. Recognition must also go to my fieldwork group for their contributions to my end result. I would like to also acknowledge the Indigenous community for welcoming our interest and allowing us to investigate their traditional way of life in the region.



As the title suggests, my panel is a visual representation of "the way we went." Although my panel cannot strictly speaking be referenced in the same way as a map, there are elements within my panel that allow the viewer to gain idea of the terrain and possibly recreate my groups journey through the land on this particular day of exploration.

As a group we were assigned a transect that ran from Mt Gambier up to Penola, but embracing what was a key area of our learning this semester we did away with plans and traditional maps, deciding instead to allow our guide, Nick Hunt to take us wayfaring. We spent a large portion of our day in the general vicinity of our transect, but soon found ourselves on the South Coast, far from our intended path, but learning of the area and its indigenous inhabitants none the less.

Looking back on the days we spent exploring the district it is hard to describe it as anything less than a journey and that is what I have attempted to illustrate in the design and presentation of my panel.

Firstly, there is the dotted line. This dotted line follows our exact path across the district that day taken from a GPS tracking of our journey. To me, this dotted line exemplifies the concept of wayfaring, but in doing so pulls the abstract concepts that evolve from the word into a tangible form.

The text that hangs from the dotted line tells the story of our journey and creates the somewhat retraceable story of our journey. For the sake of readability, I have taken some artistic licence in the placement of some pieces of text. It should therefore also be noted that we followed speed limits at all times and no conclusions should be drawn from the calculation of time over distance.

In honest the amount of fading of the text and line was not entirely of design, but I like to think it has presented in a way the represents the memory of a journey and the fading of those memories in an appropriate form. The images spread across the panel are supposed to support this idea of the visual representation of key memories.

The square pieces of timber are made of Blue Gum and are arranged in a way that attempts to mimic the slight undulations in the relatively flat landscape. As the timber industry plays a large role in the area and its landscape I wanted my work to present the natural beauty of the timber. This is why I chose my fairly minimalistic approach, using the monochromatic palette to maximise the negative space. The small patches of white that shine through from behind the Blue Gum panel were designed to represent the limestone that protrudes from the ground in areas within the landscape.

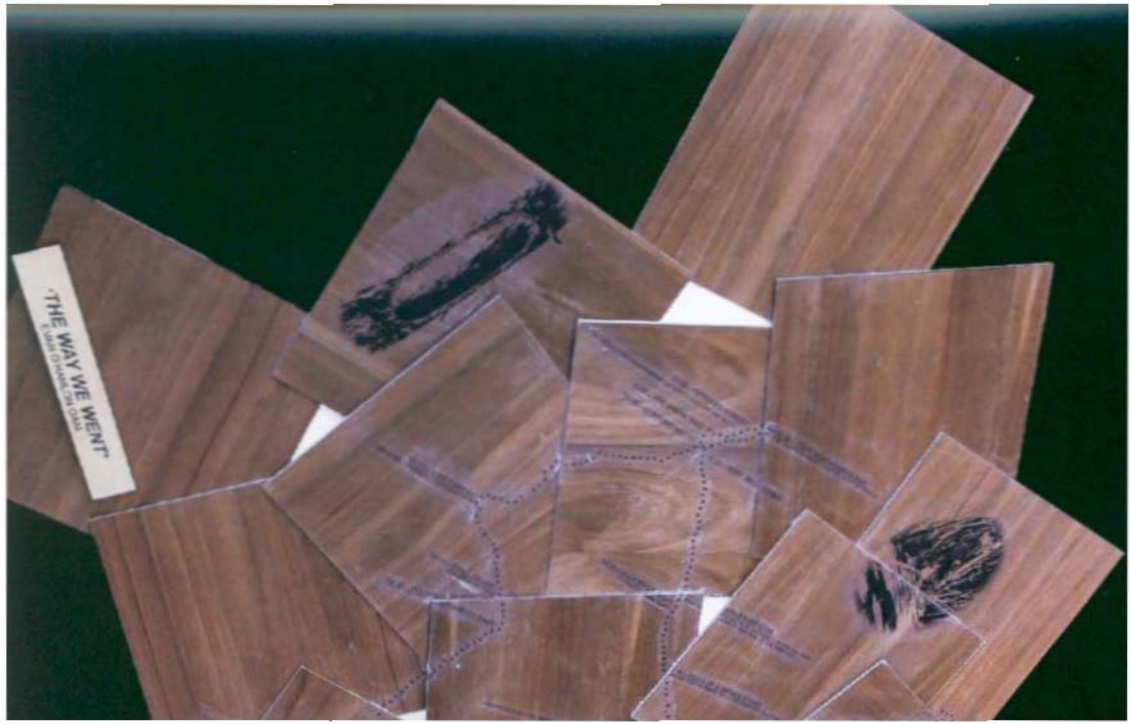
We set out in an attempt to explore the traditional indigenous culture and document what we could for safe keeping, but in fact, we also gathered much information on the current way of life and knowledge systems of the area. It struck me that with the generational migration away from the agricultural industry, this way of life, although still surviving if compared with its indigenous predecessor is also an endangered knowledge system. In my work I have attempted to represent both in a way that highlights their fragility.





**'THE WAY WE WENT'**

By Jane O'Hara, 1991



# Scar Trees

Transect 4 Mount Gambier to Penola (Team 2)



**OWEN DARK**

I am a university student studying landscape architecture. I decided to become a landscape architect because I've always enjoyed the outdoors and I want to bring sustainable urban design back into city landscapes. I want to make an impact on the world in the form of a modernistic, conceptual and sustainable design like that of vertical landscapes or rooftop gardens.

This experience in Mt Gambier has enhanced my understanding of sustainable practices and cultural concepts that I can incorporate into my designs in the future. I played an equal part in the construction and concept design for the creative response for our transect. The timber was supplied from my house and as a group we cleaned it up and made it into what you see now.



**RILEY DOWTON**

I am a third year landscape architecture student at the University of Canberra. I chose to study landscape architecture because of my attraction to both design and the natural environment. My inspirations mainly come from the Australian landscape, which I find unique in the texture, colour and severity. Future goals for my career in architecture include both residential and commercial design.

I have found the Mt Gambier project very rewarding. We were able to create a connection between us, the local residents, land and history of Australian indigenous culture in the area. One enjoyable aspect to this task was the community support with our work, especially their interest and involvement in the overall outcome for the project.

We were introduced to our designated transect by Nick Hunt, a local farmer. Nick was very enthusiastic in showing us many of the different red gums around the area and also other landscape features — from the vast floodplains to the middens along the coast.

We took many of these aspects of the landscape into consideration when designing our panel.

Like Nick, we were intrigued about the ancient red gums and the importance they held for the Aboriginal people. As we travelled through the landscape we saw evidence of scarring in the trees and also manipulation of the tree limbs and trunks.

For our panel we decided to represent the scar tree in its raw form, with our journey through the countryside incorporated into the levels and curvature of the wood.

The journey map represents the farming land that has now taken over this land. The tree trunk, which serves as a backdrop to the map, represents the Aboriginal cultural heritage of the land. This heritage is important to keep alive, for they are living artefacts that were around when the Boandik people used them hundreds of years ago.









# Kromelite Menindie

Transect 5 Millicent to Lake George



**AJAY JOSHI**

I'm 20 years old, studying in my 3rd year of Bachelor in Design/Landscape Architecture Degree at the University of Canberra. I

have always been interested in landscapes that can be natural or man made.

This project has made me think and has taught me the values of landscape and what beholds it, thanks to Scott Heyes, Setoki Tuiteci, the South Australian Government, the people of Mount Gambier, and our hosts, Ian Stewart and Greg Todd. The transect between Rendelsham and Beachport had overwhelmed me, by the values and Aboriginal history of the landscape. I have taken this in, with my fellow group mates, Tom and Pat to create our story from the transect.

My contribution to the project included: drawing field diagrams, field observation, note taking, researching, design, panel construction, draft booklet, and presentation.



**TOM STAFF**

This is my fourth and graduating year at the University of Canberra. I am Studying a Bachelor of Environmental Science and a Bachelor of Arts in Landscape.

I am extremely passionate about sustainable design, cultural heritage, ecological conservation and native land management. I would love to work with Aboriginal communities in the future and legislate land management methodologies that incorporate indigenous knowledge. Participatory planning is essential to achieve the best environmental outcome. The experience I have had in the Boandik landscape has only broadened my horizon and encouraged me to follow my aspirations.

For this project I wrote the methodology, undertook research, and worked with my team members to design and make the panel and booklet. I also took photos and noted observations in the field.



**PAT STELZIG**

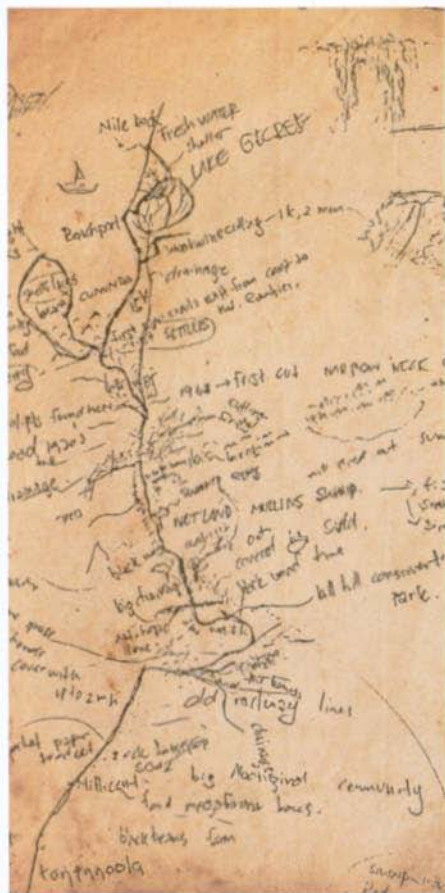
My family background is that of fashion designers and artists, and I have a background in architecture. I'm a third-year student at the University of Canberra and am working towards degrees in Bachelor of Design and Bachelor of Landscape Architecture.

My interests are landscape architecture, architecture, art and digital design. My artistic philosophies are anchored in modern and traditional art. I believe that "imagination" will get you anywhere, my slogan is "Keep It Simple".

What I have learnt from this unit is that "sometimes imperfection is perfection."

My contributions to this project included: drawing field diagrams, field observations, note taking, researching, design, design editing, final design drafting, and presentation.





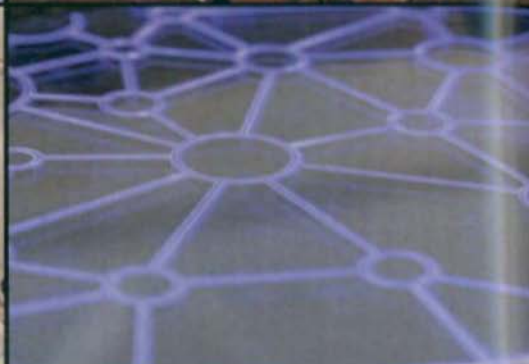
Our travels in the South Australian landscape have given us insight into the historic lives of the *Boandik* and *Meintangk* people. It has provided us with an appreciation for the natural landscape and the sustainable custodians of the land.

A counter-mapping methodology was used on a wandering transect between Rendelsham and Beachport. We all felt like wayfaring cartographers on our transect journey, capturing the Aboriginal heritage and landscape sites. The significant indigenous sites included: Rendelsham, Belt Hill Campgrounds, Mullins Swamp, Narrow Neck, Canunda National Park, Woolwine Cutting, Lake George and Three and Five Mile Beach.

*Kromelite Menindie* is the name we have chosen for our panel. This translates to 'red mud' in the *Boandik* language. *Kromelite Menindie* represents the mud that was left after the wetlands were drained and symbolises other damage done to the environment through agricultural and industrial practices, as well as the major changes that have occurred to Aboriginal society since European settlement. The name coincides with the material, symbology and history of our transect panel.

We want the panel to be a meeting place where people can learn and discuss the *Boandik* culture. We acknowledge the following guides for assisting us in the field: Greg Todd, Ian Stewart, David New and Dale Hancock.









Kromelitz Menindee



# Sweet Waters an artwork in cultural mapping in the lower south-east.

Transect 6 Penola to Naracoorte including Bool Lagoon and Naracoorte Caves



ALLY KIM

Ally Hyojung Kim is a Landscape Architecture student with a degree in Transportation Engineering and three years service in the Korean

Army. Her ultimate dream is to become a redemptive landscape architect travelling all around the world to provide aid through her design. For the project I undertook the following tasks:

- Researched Indigenous tribes near Bool Lagoon
- Took videos during field trip
- Created the concept design
- Created a short video of our journey
- Modelled tissue paper to create the texture and base for the panel



RYL PARKER

Ryl Parker is a student in Landscape Architecture and Environmental Science, inspired by her mother (horticulture) and her

father (engineer). She is passionate about drawing and painting. Her dream is to design natural and sustainable landscapes to improve our mental and physical health. For the project I undertook the following tasks:

- Researched Scottish and Aboriginal History (with a focus on Naracoorte)
- Took notes and photos during fieldtrip
- Interviewed guides (including Rob Palamountain and Michael Anderson)
- Created this booklet
- Detailed design painting of Panel



HAN ZHANG

Han Zhang is a third year landscape architecture student. He was interested in landscape design at young age due to his father, who is a professional architect in China.

Han thinks that good landscape design can improve people's quality of life. For the project I undertook the following tasks:

- Researched general background information
- Bought construction and craft materials
- Edited images on Photoshop
- Photographed our progress during the fieldtrip and for the panel
- Helped create the tissue paper base and paint the panel



Bool Lagoon is a place of life, growth and reconciliation. It has always had a diverse ecology rich in water-based species. For thousands of years Aboriginal groups enjoyed it as a bountiful hunting ground and meeting place. More recently non-Aboriginal settlers claimed the land for hunting, farming and conservation, but the area was no longer used to discuss and negotiate. Today, better understanding of aboriginal practices and land management has contributed to a greater desire to reconcile with Aborigines and their numerous cultures.

The mother represents nature which has formed the foetus of Bool Lagoon. The three strands of her hair represent the three major aboriginal tribes that held meetings in Naracoorte. The markings on the woman's skin are a



reminder of the traditions and customs that held the tribes together. Various non-Aboriginal people crowd around her, but neither they nor the mother have changed the nature of the Bool Lagoon. It is devoid of culture, which paradoxically makes it the ideal place for cultures to interact and learn from each other. Even though we have minimal physical evidence of how the tribes used to live, their culture im-



pacts ours. The geographical names *Bool Lagoon* (sweet drink), *Penola* (stringy bark, wooden hut or big swamp), *Coonawarra* (honeysuckle rise) and *Naracoorte* (water hole) are all derived from Aboriginal names. Just consider how enmeshed our cultures could become if there were tribes still living there! Like the waters of the lagoon, our knowledge and beliefs will flow together.



We hope that this artwork gets you thinking about opportunities for us to learn from other cultures, and to see how valuable it would be for all those involved.







